

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2016

by J A B Gresty MA MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 17 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/16/3163058
31 Abbotshall Road, Catford, London SE6 1SQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Joanna York against the decision of the Council for the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/16/098165, dated 2 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 2 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is a new rear extension to enlarge the kitchen and dining space and a new dormer and loft space which will provide a new bedroom and shower room.
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Decisions

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a new rear extension to enlarge the kitchen and dining space at 31 Abbotshall Road, Catford, London SE6 1SQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/16/098165, dated 2 September 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: AR31_01, AR31_02, AR31_03, AR31_04, AR31_05, AR31_06, AR31_07 rev B, AR31_08B, AR31_11 rev B, AR31_12 & AR31_Block Plan
2. The appeal is dismissed with respect to and a new dormer and loft space which will provide a new bedroom and shower room.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a mid-terrace, two-storey, brick built house with a pitched tiled roof and is of similar design and scale to the neighbouring properties in the terrace. The appeal proposal includes construction of a dormer extension to the rear elevation of the house roof. The dormer would occupy
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more or less the whole of the rear elevation of the roof and would have a very gently sloping mono-pitch roof which would have the appearance of a flat-roof when viewed from the appeal property's garden. As a consequence of its box-like design, its height, width and overall bulk, the dormer would dominate the appearance of the rear elevation of the house, in effect creating a flat-roofed second floor to the house when viewed from the rear.

5. Policy 31 of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan (DM) requires extensions to be of a high, site specific and sensitive design quality and should complement the form of the original buildings. Further, part 6.7 of the Lewisham Residential Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) indicates that all roof extensions should be successfully integrated with the architectural character of the original building and be subordinate to the principle elevations. The SPD also indicates that planning permission will not normally be given for box dormers which occupy the whole slope of the roof and that rear roof extensions should be set back from the lines of the eaves and party walls of the building. In this case the proposed dormer would not be subordinate to the rear elevation of the property and it would not be set back into the roof as sought by the SPD. Accordingly the development would fail to meet the design aims of DM Policies 30 and 31 and Policy 15 of the Lewisham Core Strategy (CS).
6. The second main element of the appeal proposal is a single-storey rear extension. The extension would have a gently-sloping mono-pitch roof and would span the whole width of the rear elevation of the house. Because of its single-story design, the extension would be subordinate to the host building and terrace as a whole. The Council does not object to the character or appearance of the proposed ground floor extension and I concur with the Council that it would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area and would accord with DM Policies 30 and 31 and CS Policy 15.

Conclusion

7. The development scheme consists of two distinct parts which I am able to separate. Accordingly, I am able to issue a split decision in this case.
8. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should make places better for people. Although the proposed dormer extension would provide useful additional living space for the appellant-1, in this case I conclude that this does not outweigh the harm the extension would do to the character and appearance of the host property and local area. Further, whilst there are a few large box-like dormer extensions to the rear elevations of other nearby properties visible from the back garden of the appeal property, these do not complement the character or appearance of the local area and do not provide justification for the proposed dormer extension. Therefore, for the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed dormer extension would not represent sustainable development as sought by the Framework and the appeal should be dismissed.
9. The proposed single-storey rear extension would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area and, for the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed in this respect.

Conditions

10. For the sake of clarity, I impose a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

J A B Gresty

INSPECTOR